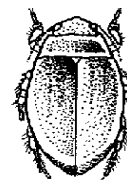


South Carolina DHEC's Water Watch



UPDATE

Winter 2003

Watching Water in Their Own Backyard!



The Ashborough Adventurers know that water quality begins in their own backyard. This 4-H group studies their neighborhood stormwater pond in Summer-ville. The detention pond, Ashborough Lake, drains to the Ashley River. Assisted by their leader, Clemson Extension Agent, Debbie Elek, this group monitors temperature, dissolved oxygen, and pH in the pond.

For six weeks last summer, the Adventurers monitored the stormwater pond on a weekly basis. Just recently they have been out to monitor during the winter season. The 4-Hers have also surveyed aquatic macroinvertebrates in the pond.

These 4-H youth understand the effect that runoff pollution has on water. Actions such as

washing cars, and improper use of fertilizers or pesticides can harm water quality. They will be creating a brochure to hand out to the neighborhood. The brochure will tell about the pond and how residents can protect the water quality of the pond. Positive action for the health of the pond will protect the river too.

The 4-Hers have concluded that their stormwater pond is in good shape. They were even able to reassure neighborhood residents of the pond's good health during a duckweed bloom. The Ashborough community newsletter mentioned their monitoring activities and that they had not seen any major change in the factors they were monitoring.



The Ashborough Adventurers have combined two great activities, monitoring and education. They are learning and then *sharing* what they know about water quality.

Keep up the good work!!



I would love to highlight your Water Watch group in the Water Watch Update. You don't have to wait until its time to fill out an annual activity form to let me know what your group has been doing. Feel free to drop me a line anytime. (Pictures would be great too.) lasallli@dhec.sc.gov, or call, Lynne LaSalle (803)898-4211.

What's up in the watershed?

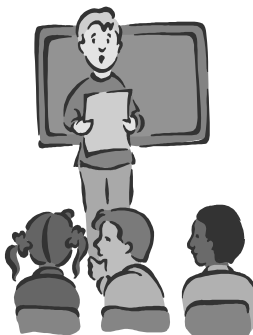
Water Watch groups often ask for suggestions about activities to try. Storm drain tagging and biological surveys are a couple of great hands-on activities. However, another great activity and teaching tool is a *watershed survey*. An awareness of the watershed and how activities in that watershed can affect water quality is very important. The benefit of a survey like this, as with any kind of monitoring, is repeating it over time.

In some Adopt-a-Stream programs a survey is the first activity required of any group. A survey of the watershed gives you an idea of possible problems. Following up a watershed survey with visual surveys of the area adjacent to an adopted waterbody allows you to keep tabs on what is happening in that area. If you go

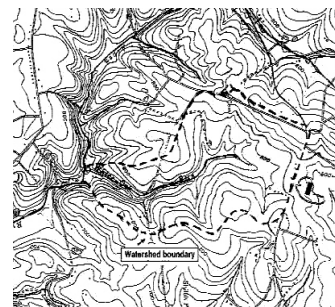


out during every season, you will learn what is normal and notice when there is a change. Pictures and written observations can allow others to continue with surveys if membership of the group change for any reason.

Each Water Watch group should have a goal in mind when adopting a waterbody. A watershed survey can help to meet that goal. Once you have educated yourself about your watershed, you may want to present information to others such as school groups or community groups. You may also find a problem that you can fix; such as reducing litter by holding a litter cleanup or planting trees to reduce erosion. You might even want to tackle runoff from construction sites by talking with local developers about your adopted stream and what it means to your group and the community.



There are many ways to survey a watershed. A good place to start is with a topographic map of the area. Define the area included in your watershed.



You can find out about permitted dischargers through watershed documents available from SC DHEC, www.scdhec.net/water (click on Watersheds & TMDL, then click on Watershed Water Quality Assessment). Another source of information about what is happening in your watershed can be found at US EPA's "Surf your Watershed" website, www.epa.gov/surf. You may also want to obtain a land use map. But to really learn about the watershed, it is best to go out and *look at it for yourself*. That way you will see firsthand the land use and kinds of activities taking place there.

For more information:

- "Volunteer Stream Monitoring: A Methods Manual. Chapter 3 (Watershed Survey Methods)" EPA:841-B-97-003. www.epa.gov/volunteer/stream/index.html
- "Getting to Know Your Watershed" & "Visual Stream Survey" Georgia Adopt-A-Stream. www.riversalive.com/AAS_manuals.htm
- To obtain topographic maps SC DNR Map and Information Center, (803) 734-9108, www.dnr.state.sc.us/water/envaff/cic/mapcenter.html USGS, <http://mac.usgs.gov/mac/isb/pubs/pubslists/index.html>
- Contact the WW coordinator, Lynne LaSalle, (803)898-4211, lasallli@dhec.sc.gov

Spring into Water Quality: Water-related Happenings for March-May

There was a lot of hoopla last October to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Clean Water Act ... and the celebration continues. The US EPA Office of Water has been posting a water topic each month since June, 2002. The water topic for **March** is **Nonpoint Source Awareness Month**. Check out the US EPA Year of Clean Water website for more details, www.epa.gov/water/yearofcleanwater.

40 percent of South Carolina's population rely on groundwater for drinking. **Groundwater Awareness Week** takes place **March 16 - 22**. America's Groundwater Foundation encourages everyone to learn about groundwater and how to protect it. *Groundwater can be affected by runoff pollution too!*



You might want to observe **World Day for Water, March 22**. Created by a United Nations resolution, World Day for Water was first celebrated on March 22, 1993.

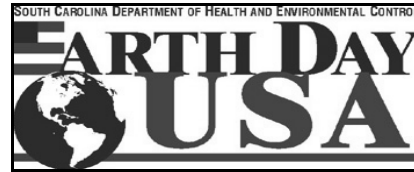
Check out the website, www.waterday2003.org, to learn more. At this site you can also learn more about the International Year of Freshwater.

Earth Day is **April 22nd**. Check around your local community to see if there will be any events in honor of Earth Day. You might volunteer to have a water quality display or to lend a hand with the activities already planned.

If you visit the **Earth Day Network** website, www.earthday.org, you will notice that their focus this year is "Water for Life". They are encouraging groups to monitor their local waterbody for Earth Day.

SC DHEC's Earth Day Video will be broadcast by SCETV on **April 22nd** from 1:00–1:30

PM. Using a morning news show format, this video will have short environmental segments and some catchy Public Service Announcements. To learn more about the related lesson plans and pre- and post-test for students, visit www.scdhec.net/earthday.



May is **Wetlands Month**. The Izaak Walton League has many ways for you to celebrate the wonders of wetlands. There will also be a **Wetlands Conference, May 1–4**, in Minneapolis, MN. Visit <http://www.iwla.org/sos/awm> for more information on Wetlands Month or the conference.

SC DHEC has *wetland packets* available, contact me, Lynne LaSalle, if you would like one.



Got clean drinking water? **May 6 – 11** is **Drinking Water Week**. Go to the Consumer Water Center pages of the American Water Works Association website, www.awwa.org/Advocacy/learn, and click on National Drinking Water Week to learn more.

Join other outdoor enthusiasts in cleaning up the nation's rivers. **National River Clean-up Week** is **May 10 – 17**. Visit the America Outdoors® website, www.americaoutdoors.org, for more information or to register a clean-up.

If you are interested in any of the above and do not have Internet access or have difficulty getting to a site, please let me know, Lynne LaSalle, lasalli@dhec.sc.gov, (803) 898-4211.

South Carolina DHEC's *Water Watch*



www.scdhec.net/wwatch

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